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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/542,254	07/15/2005	Philippe Caplain	38469	2741

116 7590 08/11/2006

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EXAMINER

LEE, GILBERT Y

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3673

DATE MAILED: 08/11/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/542,254	CAPLAIN ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Gilbert Y. Lee	3673	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 15 July 2005 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____. |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>8/11/05</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____. |

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the some of the supports touching the casing as claimed in claim 2 must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Specification

2. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: the disclosure does not contain the proper headings for each section.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Objections

3. Claims 1-13 are objected to because of the following informalities: all independent claims must begin with "A" and all dependent claims must begin with "The". Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claims 2, 3, 5, 6, and 8-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 2 and 3 recites the limitation "the projections". There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Regarding claims 5 and 6, it is unclear to the examiner whether the applicant is claiming that the supports are blocks and rings or if the applicant is claiming that the support consists of a ring which acts as blocks.

Regarding claim 6 it is unclear as to what "it" is referring to in line 1.

Claim 8 recites the limitation "the contact between pairs of waves creating the supports." It is unclear to the examiner as to how the waves will contact if the supports as claimed in claim 1 separate the flexible strips.

Claim 9 recites the limitation "the spaces" in line 3. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim 10 recites the limitation "the flexible joints" in line 2. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. For the purposes of this examination, the examiner is interpreting the claim to read "the flexible strips".

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. Claims 1-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Lemercier (US Patent No. 4,055,464).

Regarding claim 1, the Lemercier reference discloses a sealing joint (Fig. 1) comprising an external casing (1) and a flexible internal structure (Col. 1, Lines 16-28), characterized in that the internal structure is made of flexible strips (e.g. 6 or 7), overlaid and separated by supports (e.g. 6 or 7), the strips being staggered (Fig. 1).

Regarding claims 2 and 3, the Lemercier reference, as best understood, discloses supports (6).

Regarding claim 4, the Lemercier reference discloses the flexible strips being distinct, with a closed outline (Fig. 1).

Regarding claims 5 and 6, the Lemercier reference, as best understood, discloses supports (6).

Regarding claim 7, the Lemercier reference discloses the flexible strips (6) being made of metal (Col. 2, Lines 31-36).

Regarding claim 8, the Lemercier reference, as best understood, discloses the flexible strips (6) being corrugated (Fig. 1).

Regarding claim 9, the Lemercier reference, as best understood, discloses the supports (6) being laid out in successive rows crossing the joint through two support surfaces opposite the case, the supports and the spaces separating the flexible strips alternating in each row and from one row to another (Fig. 1).

Regarding claim 10, the Lemercier reference, as best understood, discloses the flexible strips (7) being concentric (Col. 2, Lines 36-40).

Regarding claim 11, the Lemercier reference discloses the flexible strips (7) being circular and flat (Fig. 1).

Regarding claim 12, the Lemercier reference discloses the supports (7) radiating (Fig. 1). Note that the supports 7 have a radius, therefore is considered to be radiating from a center point.

Regarding claim 13, the Lemercier reference discloses the supports being concentric rings with differing radii (Fig. 1).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Gilbert Y. Lee whose telephone number is 571-272-5894. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00 - 4:30, M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Patricia L. Engle can be reached on (571)272-6660. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only.

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For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>.

Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Patricia Engle
SPE
Art Unit 3673

GL
8/1/06